

*Ges.* Darest thou question me ?

*Tell.* Darest thou not answer ?

*Ges.* Do I hear ?

*Tell.* Thou dost.

*Ges.* Beware my vengeance.

*Tell.* Can it more than kill ?

*Ges.* Enough ; it can do that.

*Tell.* No ; not enough :

It cannot take away the grace of life ;

Its comeliness of look that virtue gives ;

Its port erect with consciousness of truth ;

Its rich attire of honorable deeds ;

Its fair report that's rife on good men's tongues ;

It cannot lay its hands on these, no more

Than it can pluck the brightness from the sun,

Or with polluted finger tarnish it.

*Ges.* But it can make thee writhe.

*Tell.* It may.

*Ges.* And groan.

*Tell.* It may ; and I may cry,

Go on, though it should make me groan again.

*Ges.* Whence comest thou ?

*Tell.* From the mountains. Wouldst thou learn

What news from them ?

*Ges.* Canst tell me any ?

*Tell.* Ay : they watch no more the avalanche.

*Ges.* Why so ?

*Tell.* Because they look for thee. The hurricane

Comes unawares upon them ; from its bed

The torrent breaks and finds them in its track.

*Ges.* What do they then ?

*Tell.* Thank heaven, it is not thou !

Thou hast perverted nature in them.

There's not a blessing heaven vouchsafes them, but

The thought of thee—doth wither to a curse.

*Ges.* That's right ! I'd have them like their hills,